

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of providing interactive entertainment to a plurality of users, each having a television receiver for receiving program information from a service through a first communication path and a terminal ~~connected~~ connectable to the service through a two-way communication path, said method comprising the steps of:

transmitting television programs to the receivers through the first communication path;

logging a user into a network server associated with the service through the two-way communication path using the terminal;

informing said server ~~being informed~~ of user preferences using the terminal;

determining, by said server, that a demographic group of users is logged onto said server based on information received by said two-way communication path and the user preferences of users that are currently logged onto the network server by the terminals;

controlling in said network server, according to user preferences of said demographic group of users, transmission ~~to a receiver~~ of at least one of program content and first supplemental information pertaining to a program to the television receivers of at least the users in said demographic group of users; and

~~receiving information in the terminal over the two-way communication path from the server descriptive of at least one of program delivery and second supplemental information pertaining to a program~~ displaying, by said television receivers of at least the users in said demographic group of users, a video and data display based on the at least one of program content and first supplemental information transmitted over the first communication path and subjected to control by said network server.

2. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein user preferences input through ~~[[a]]~~ the terminal to the network server in conjunction with current program content partially alters current program content provided to the user.

3. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said first supplemental information is further determined according to time of transmission of a television program.

4. (currently amended) The method of claim 2, wherein:
said first supplemental information elicits a vote from a user;
said user preferences input through [[a]] the terminal include a user's vote; and
said first supplemental information subsequently includes information descriptive of users' voting.

5. (currently amended) ~~The [[A]] method of providing interactive video and data displays to each of a plurality of users, each having a television receiver and a data terminal, in accordance with information provided by each user through a data terminal~~ claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

maintaining, in association with [[a]] the network server, a first database of information for each user including at least one of identification, address information, financial information, general preference information, and demographic information;

wherein said step of logging a user into a network server comprises receiving in the network server from user data terminals over the network and maintaining in a second database, for each user, registration information indicating current activity and current preference information;

and wherein said step of displaying a video and data display further comprises at least one of:

modifying content of television programming according to current content of said first database and said second database; and

sending a message from the network server over the network for display on a user's terminal.

6. (currently amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the step of ~~modifying content of television programming comprises:~~ determining that a demographic group

of users is logged onto the network server comprises determining according to current registrations in conjunction with said demographic information a determined preponderant demographic group currently viewing a television program; and

the step of modifying content comprises replacing advertisements in the television program with advertisements predetermined to be targeted at said determined preponderant demographic group.

7. (currently amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the step of ~~modifying content of television programming comprises:~~ determining that a demographic group of users is logged onto the network server comprises determining according to current registrations in conjunction with said demographic information a determined plurality of demographic groups watching a particular program; and

the step of modifying content comprises, for each of said determined plurality of demographic groups exceeding in size a predetermined threshold, replacing advertisements in the television program as transmitted via cable or satellite transmission with advertisements predetermined to be targeted at each demographic group and inserting control information in the television transmission for instructing users' set-top boxes to extract and forward information targeted at the demographic group.

8. (currently amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the current preference information provided by a user includes a request for additional information regarding television content the user is registered as viewing, and wherein the network server arranges for additional information to be mailed to the user at an address retrieved from the first database.

9. (currently amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the current preference information provided by a user includes a request for additional information regarding television content the user is registered as viewing, and wherein the network server appends such additional information to cable or satellite television transmission for viewing by the requesting user.

10. (currently amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the current preference information provided by a user includes a request to purchase an item currently featured in television content the user is registered as viewing,

and wherein the network server arranges for the item to be shipped to the user and arranges to debit the user for cost of the item from a financial account according to the first database.

11. (currently amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the current preference information provided by a user includes a request to participate in a lottery, and wherein the network server:

prompts the user to select lottery numbers;

receives and validates user-selected lottery numbers;

debits the user for participating in the lottery from a financial account according to the first database;

enters the user in the lottery; and

sends a message for display to the user confirming participation in the lottery.

12. (currently amended) A The method of claim 5, of providing interactive video and data displays to each of a plurality of users, each having a television receiver and a data terminal, in accordance with information provided by each user through a data terminal, comprising the steps of:

maintaining, in association with a network server, a first database of information for each user including at least one of identification, address information, financial information, general preference information, and demographic information;

receiving in the network server from user data terminals over the network and maintaining in a second database, for each user, registration information indicating current activity and current preference information;

at least one of:

modifying content of television programming according to current content of said first database and said second database; and

sending a message from the network server over a network for display on a user's terminal.

wherein the current preference information provided by a user includes a request to learn the most commonly selected numbers in a lottery, and wherein the network server[[:]] obtains the most commonly selected lottery numbers; and forwards a message to the requesting user terminal for displaying said most commonly selected lottery numbers.

13. (original) The method according to claim 12, wherein the message for displaying said most commonly selected lottery numbers displays in the form of a histogram.

14. (original) The method according to claim 12, wherein if the number of users requesting to learn said most commonly selected lottery numbers exceeds a predetermined threshold, the network server appends a display of said most commonly selected lottery numbers to television programming.

15. (currently amended) The method according to claim 5, wherein the current preference information provided by a user includes commentary regarding television program the user is registered as viewing, and wherein the network server forwards messages for displaying a user's commentary to other users registered as viewing the same television program.

16. (currently amended) A system for providing interactive video and data displays to each of a plurality of users, comprising:

a network server for controlling a transmission of television programs;

a television receiver associated with each user for receiving television program signals over a first communication path;

a data terminal associated with each user and connectable to said network server through a second two-way communication path for logging onto said network server and transmitting user preferences to said network server;

a network server;

a network for connecting the data terminals to the network server;

a first database associated with the network server for storing persistent information descriptive of each user; and

a second database associated with the network server for storing current user preference information submitted by users by the second two-way communication path;

wherein said network server is adapted to determine that a demographic group of users is logged onto said server based on information received by said two-way communication path and the user preferences of users that are currently logged onto the network server by the data terminals, the network server operable to modify television programs being transmitted to users and control, according to user preferences of said demographic group of users, transmission of at least one of program content and first supplemental information pertaining to a program to the television receivers of at least the users in said demographic group of users, and

whereby the network server, responsive to said first and second databases and to current requests from users, provides interactive displays on users' terminals and adapts television programming interactively said television receivers being adapted to display a video and data display based on the at least one of the program content and the first supplemental information transmitted over the first communication path and subjected to control by said network server.

17. (new) A network server for controlling transmission of television program signals to a plurality of users, each of the users having a television receiver for receiving the television program signals over a first communication path and a data terminal connected to said network server through a second two-way communication path, said network server comprising:

means for logging user data terminals onto the network server and receiving user preference information from the user data terminals;

means for determining that a demographic group of users is logged onto said server based on information received by said two-way communication path and the user preferences of users that are currently logged onto the network server by the data terminals;

means for controlling, according to user preferences of said demographic group of users, transmission of at least one of program content and first supplemental information pertaining to a program to the television receivers of at least the users in said demographic group of users so that the television receivers of at least the users in said demographic group of users

display a video and data display based on the at least one of the program content and the first supplemental information transmitted over the first communication path and subjected to control by said network server.

18. (new) The method of claim 5, wherein the current preference information provided by a user includes a request to learn the most commonly selected numbers in a lottery, and wherein the network server obtains the most commonly selected lottery numbers and forwards a message to the requesting user terminal for displaying said most commonly selected lottery numbers.

19. (new) The method according to claim 18, wherein the message for displaying said most commonly selected lottery numbers displays in the form of a histogram.

20. (new) The method according to claim 18, wherein if the number of users requesting to learn said most commonly selected lottery numbers exceeds a predetermined threshold, the network server appends a display of said most commonly selected lottery numbers to television programming.